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Summer Heat Poses Danger to Kids in Cars
Just 15 Minutes in the Sun can be Fatal

(Fort Myers, Fla. – June 25, 2019) --- The summer season is in full swing across Southwest Florida, which means the sun is shining and temperatures are on the rise. This extra sunlight and heat can make cars left outside into death traps in just a few minutes.

Temperatures inside a vehicle can soar to 175 degrees under Florida’s blistering sun and a child can experience a debilitating heatstroke or worse within minutes of being left in a vehicle. Heatstroke occurs when the body isn’t able to cool itself rapidly enough. A child’s body heats up three to five times faster than adult’s, making them more vulnerable to heatstroke. Major organs begin to shut down when a child’s internal temperature reaches 104 degrees and when that temperature reaches 107 degrees, the child can die.

According to Safe Kids Worldwide, 2018 was the deadliest year on record for hot car deaths among children in the United States with 58. There have been 13 deaths so far in 2019.

“These kinds of tragedies are 100 percent preventable,” said Sally Kreuzscher, Safe Kids coordinator at Golisano Children’s Hospital of Southwest Florida. “Simple steps and reminders can go a long way toward keeping children safe, whether you’re a parent, caregiver or concerned bystander, you can help save lives.”

Kreuzscher recommends some simple steps to prevent a tragedy:

- Never leave your child alone in a car, even for a minute.
- Create reminders by putting something in the back of your car next to your child, such as a purse, briefcase or cell phone that you need at your destination. This is particularly important if you’re not following your normal routine.
- Keep your car locked when you’re not in it so kids don’t find their way in on their own.
- Call 911 if you see a child alone in a car. Emergency personnel are trained to respond to these situations and your call could save a life.

About Golisano Children's Hospital

Established in 1994, Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida has been named a "Top Hospital" by The Leapfrog Group for the past two years. It is the only recognized children's hospital between Tampa and Miami. Lee Health opened the new 128-bed Golisano Children's Hospital in May 2017, relocating the children's hospital from the adjacent HealthPark Medical Center. It includes comprehensive pediatric services including a 24-hour pediatric emergency department, hematology-oncology unit, milk lab, Regional Perinatal Intensive Care Center, and Level II and Level III NICU with 64 private rooms. Golisano Children's Hospital is proud to have been named Soliant's 2018 Most Beautiful Hospital in the U.S., a recognition determined by popular vote For more information, visit GolisanoChildrensSWFL.org